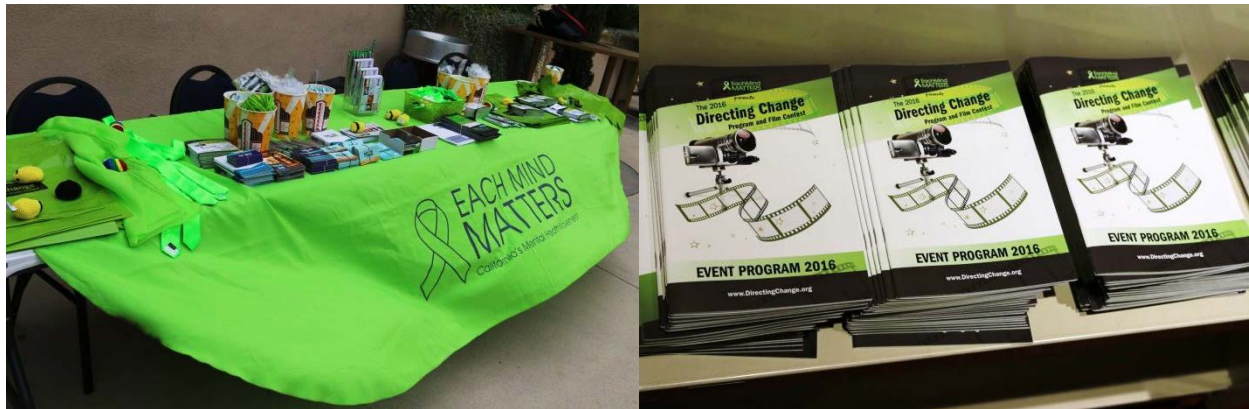


Directing Change Comes to LA to Honor Student Films About Mental Health



On Friday, May 20, 2016, the statewide campaign, [Each Mind Matters](#), brought the **Third Annual Directing Change Film Awards** to the Alex Theater in Glendale. The red-carpet event celebrated high school and college students who placed first, second and third in the Directing Change film contest across California. Celebrities from the television and film industry helped motivate and hand out the awards. The [Directing Change](#) program and film contest offers youth the opportunity to direct change by creating 60-second films to prevent suicide, reduce stigma and discrimination related to mental illness and promote the mental health and wellness of students.

The Directing Change event started early Friday morning with a panel discussion between host Stan Collins of the [Know the Signs](#) suicide prevention campaign, and three high-profile entertainment professionals: Meredith O'Connor, teen pop-star and anti-bullying icon; Bradley Buecker, director and producer of television shows "Glee" and "The New Normal," and with "Profiles of Hope" representative and advocate Michelle Enfield. The panel spoke about their own experience with mental health issues and how important having accurate representation of these issues are in film and media. Next, the kids dressed up and took limos to the front of the Alex Theater, where they walked the red carpet, took photos and had a buffet lunch. The program started at noon with LACDMH Acting Director, Robin Kay, Ph.D., welcoming the crowd of 800 attendees and stressing the impact of their accomplishments.



Students arrive to Alex Theater in style.

Event host Stan Collins presented screenings and awards throughout the afternoon. Gren Well, Director and Writer of "The Road Within," helped present the 2016 high school winners with trophies in the mental health category. LaKeith Stanfield, actor from "Short Term 12" and "Miles Ahead" helped with the suicide prevention awards for high school students.

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Meredith O'Connor sang and presented awards for the Youth and Young Adult categories. Michelle Enfield presented awards in the "Through the Lens of Culture" category.



LaKeith Stanford, Stan Collins



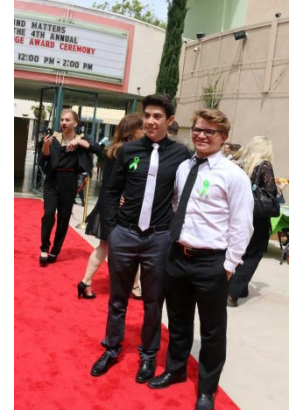
Gren Wells



Michelle Enfield







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On Thursday evening, May 19, 2016, the winners were treated to a VIP reception at the Glendale Hilton, where past contest winners spoke on how participating in the Directing Change competition changed their perspective on mental health and changed their lives. Following is a list of the alumni who spoke on their personal experiences, along with info on, and links to, their films:

“If We All Speak Loud Enough”

Canyon High School – Orange County

Student Name: **Nick Walker and his mom Nanette Walker**

Teacher Name: **Alex Graham**

<https://vimeo.com/92756723>

“More Than a Mental Illness”

Student name(s): **Emma Spiekerman**

<http://www.directingchange.org/more-than-a-mental-illness/>

“Pain Never Lasts”

Student Name: **Morrise Richardson**

<https://vimeo.com/92756717>

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